



Maple Grove Farmers Market

Power of Produce Pilot Program

Report to the Community

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Support for 2014 PoP Club Provided by:



Introduction and Background

The goal of the PoP Club program is to introduce children to the farmers market and empower them to make good food choices.

In 2014, the Maple Grove Farmers Market launched the first Power of Produce (PoP) club in Minnesota. The model for the program was developed by the Oregon City (OR) Farmers Market and has been adopted by a handful of markets across the United States.

From July 12-August 14, 2014 children ages 5-12 were invited to visit the Maple Grove Farmers Market to join the PoP Club. Kids received a reusable shopping bag upon sign-up. Thereafter, each club member received a \$2 wooden market token each week to be spent only on fresh produce or food-bearing plants. Kids of all ages enjoyed special programming including vegetable sampling, kids' cooking demonstrations, and farmers market scavenger hunt.

The six-week pilot was supported by funds from Whole Foods Market Maple Grove, The Opus Group, and Partners in Pediatrics/Children's Hospitals and Clinics of Minnesota.



Pop Club Participants

609 children participated in the program, for a total of 1,157 child shopping trips to the farmers market market during the six-week pilot.

A post-PoP Club survey* of all participating parents provided the following detail about participants:

- Boys and girls were equally represented
- Average age of participants, as reported in the survey, was 7.7 years old.
- The majority of survey respondents said they had attended the market in previous years, but a significant number (22%) reported being new customers of the Maple Grove Farmers Market.
- All respondents reported spending additional money at the market, above and beyond their child's \$2 token.
- Participating families learned about PoP through a wide variety of Market communications, including e-newsletter, signs at the market, social media, City of Maple Grove newsletter, and word of mouth from friends and family.

*Detailed results of the PoP Club survey, completed by Jessica Norman, RD,LD, MPH/MS candidate at St. Louis University, are available upon request.

PoP Club Outcomes

80% of respondents reported that their children enjoy the farmers market more than before participating in the program.

75% of respondents reported their **children helped more** in choosing fruits and/or vegetables they buy at the market than before the program.

51% of respondents indicated their children were **trying more new fruits and vegetables at home** compared to before the program.

The PoP Club Pilot survey showed that the more often a child participated in the PoP Club, the more likely he or she was to try new fruits and vegetables at home.

40.1% of respondents indicated their children were **eating more** fruits and vegetables at home than before the program.

Comments from PoP Club Parents

"I think my **kids felt more empowered** due to the fact that they had their own money to purchase the fruit and vegetables. They seemed to experience a **different kind of ownership** over the produce we came home with that day and **showed more enthusiasm** about eating and preparing the produce.

"My kids loved being able to **use or save up their tokens** to buy something they really wanted. They loved being able to **spend their own 'money'** on something and serve it for a meal."

"The **vendors were all great with the kids** and very patient while they made their selections. This is a wonderful program, and **I hope it will be back again next summer.**"

Comments from Maple Grove Farmers Market Vendors

"This is the **best** (Maple Grove Farmers Market) **program** to date."

"It's **great to see kids engaged** in choosing their own fresh produce and encouraging their parents to attend the market."

Next Steps

The Maple Grove Farmers Market seeks to expand the PoP Club from six weeks to a minimum of twelve weeks during the 2015 market season. This will enable more children to participate and experience the farmers market and the taste of locally grown, seasonal produce. The market is actively seeking sponsors for this important program.

For more information, contact Market Manager Kirsten Bansen Weigle at (763) 494-5824 or kbansenweigle@maplegrovern.gov. Learn more about the Market by visiting www.maplegrovefarmersmarket.com and following the market on Facebook and Twitter